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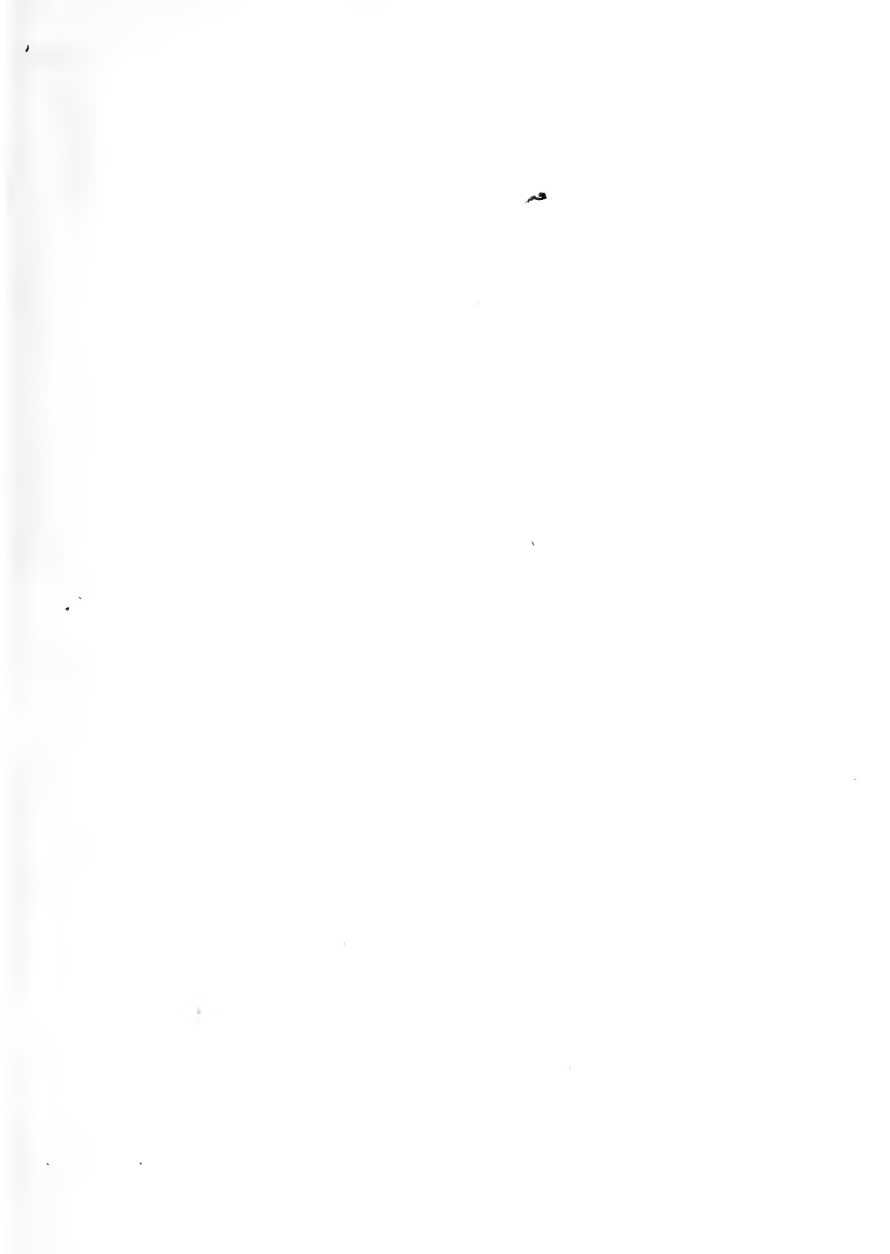


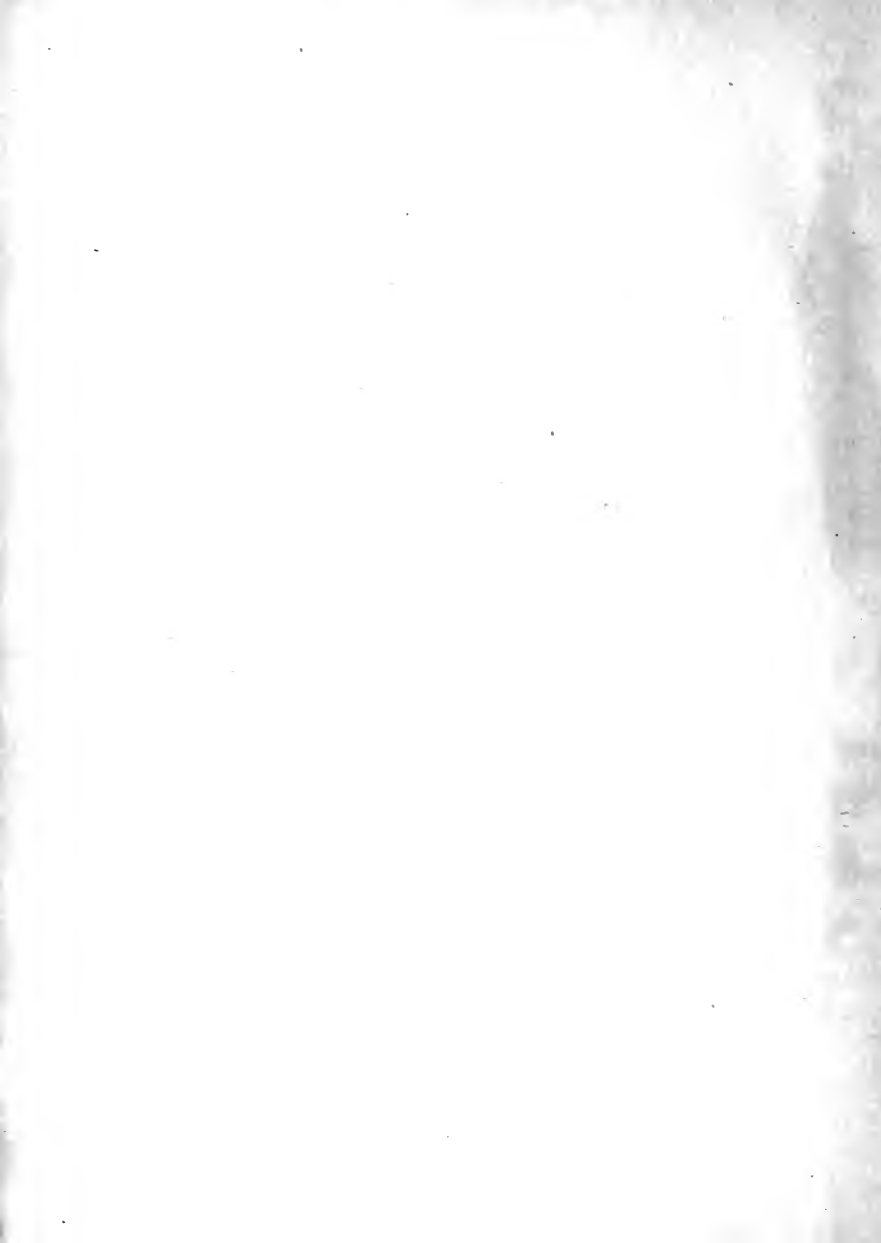
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# Young Women

## A HISTORY

OF THE

AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS

BY

REBECCA F. MORSE

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“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,  
saith the Lord of hosts.”

—Zech. iv. 6.

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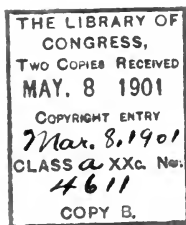
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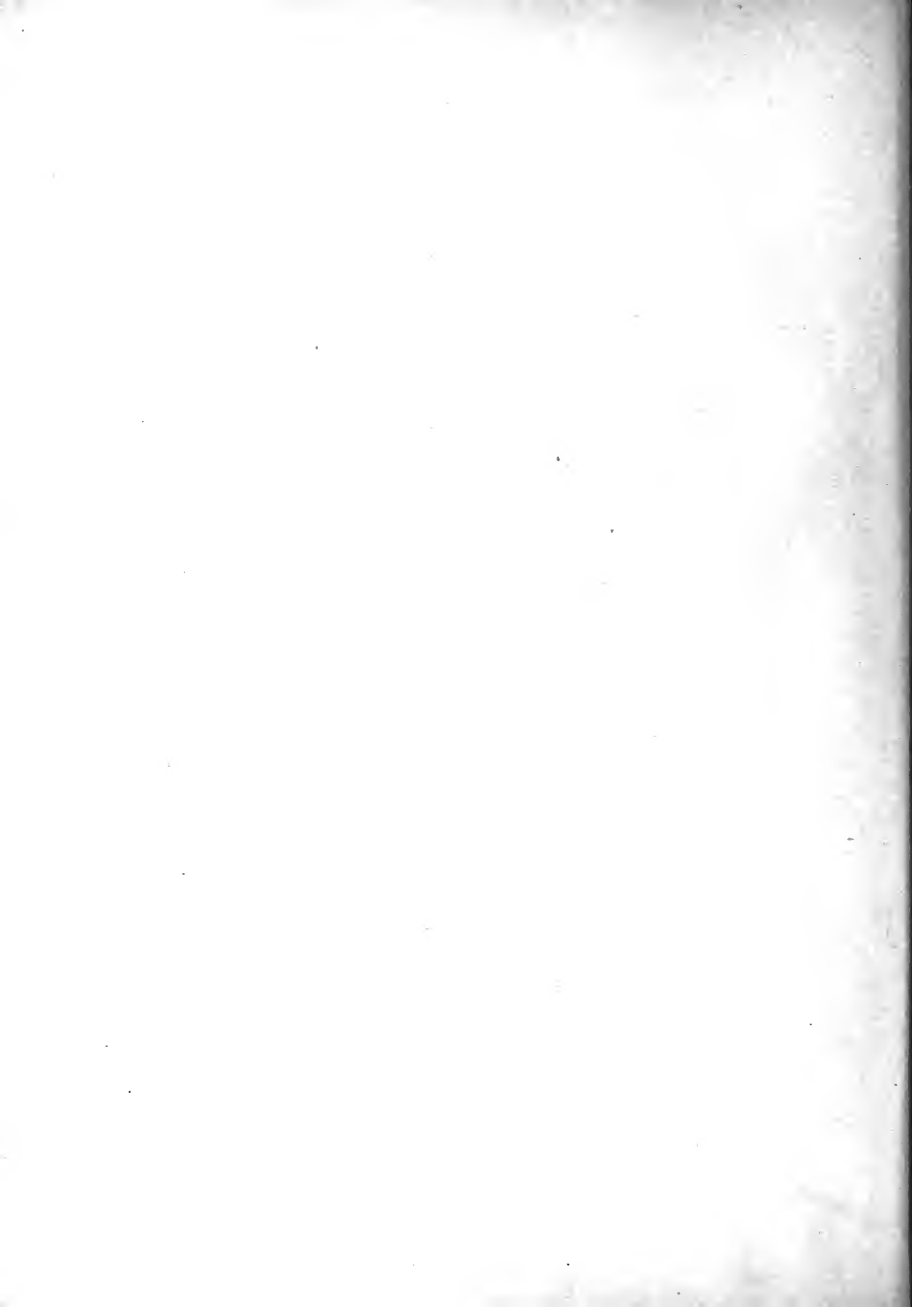


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By Rebecca F. Morse

WASHER  
STANDARD TO



It is a pleasure to dedicate  
this History of the  
American Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations  
to the first Chairman of the National Committee,  
MRS. JOHN V. FARWELL, JR.  
To whose faithful administration of her office  
the Association owes much of its prosperity.

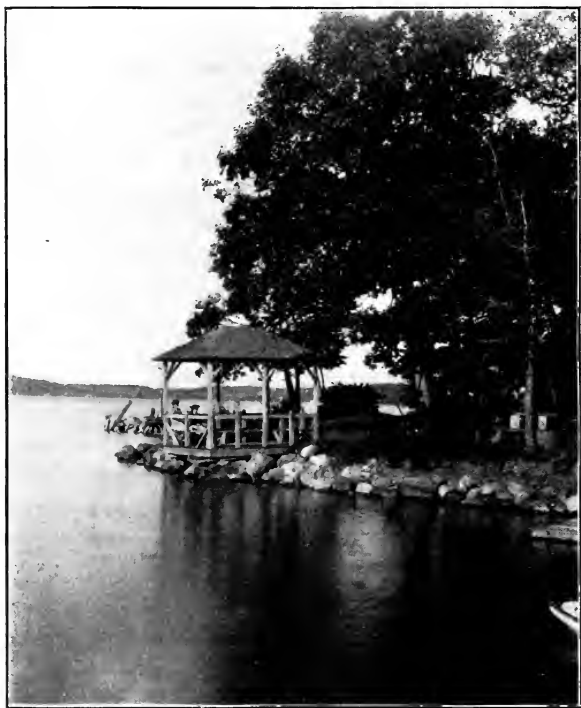


## PREFATORY NOTE

The requests for a history of our National Young Women's Christian Association have come from so many directions and so repeatedly that the American Committee has decided to issue such a publication. In compliance with its wish, I have gathered and put together the facts. My desire and effort have been that these facts should be absolutely accurate and that the relation of them should convey a faithfully true impression. Great care has therefore been taken to consult the early and late reports and records of the American Committee and also the reports of other organizations wherever reference to them and their history has been necessary. MR. LUTHER D. WISHARD has manifested great interest in the work and has rendered valuable assistance in kindly furnishing me information in regard to the early days of the organization, in which he had so large a share.

It is my hope that the story of our beginnings and development in the Association work, and its present condition, may serve to encourage renewed zeal and may testify that throughout the fourteen years of our national existence the "good hand of our God has been upon us."

REBECCA F. MORSE.



CAMP COLLIE, LAKE GENEVA, WISCONSIN.

# Young Women

## I.

### BEGINNINGS

“ With affectionate interest we look back to the beginnings of those things which possess our allegiance as established powers, or are daily enjoyed as familiar blessings. The comparison of the state of commencement with the ideal state, brings with it a natural pleasure, in marking the tendencies and the tokens of all that has happened since.”

The origin of an organization is of the first importance in the record of its history. A clear understanding of the circumstances and considerations which led to its existence is essential to a correct appreciation of its place and value in the world.

The American organization of Young Women's Christian Associations—now known under the name of the “American Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations”—was the result of a movement among students. A few isolated colleges, independently of each other, and even in some cases without knowledge of

Origin in  
Student  
Institutions.

other similar societies among young women students, formed Young Women's Christian Associations in the period between 1873 and 1877. Of these the first one was organized in 1873 in the State Normal School, Normal, Illinois.

During the years between 1877 and 1882 Mr. Luther D. Wishard, intercollegiate secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, was engaged in the work of organizing Young Men's Christian Associations in colleges throughout the country. In the co-educational colleges of the West both young men and young women were received into the membership of the association, the article on membership reading "Students," without distinction of sex, the object being to prevent a division in the Christian work of the college. The young women students, through this plan, shared in the advantages derived from the agencies of supervision, development and extension, provided by the strongly organized and well equipped International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations. They benefited by the visitation of the international and state secretaries, and the correspondence and publications of the International Committee. They attended also the state and international conventions, and took part in the discussions. Under this united arrangement the part of the young women was largely that of assistance in the work of the

young men students. That special work by young women for young women, which they can best accomplish by and among themselves in Young Women's Christian Associations, was not promoted. Neither was the similarly distinctive work of the Young Men's Christian Association, a work by young men for young men, advanced by this arrangement. The general sentiment of the association movement was opposed to its continuance. The young men's associations in the co-educational colleges were accordingly reorganized and a constitution adopted, admitting men only into the membership. As a result of this step Young Women's Christian Associations began to be formed in the colleges, Mr. Wishard advising and helping in their organization. Since these young women's associations could not be officially supervised by the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, Mr. Wishard was authorized to work in conjunction with a committee of three ladies, which, he was informed, had been appointed by the International Conference of Women's Christian Associations to encourage the formation of Young Women's Christian Associations in American colleges and seminaries.

The Conference of Women's Christian Associations had originated in a gathering of societies at the annual meeting of the Hartford

Women's Christian Association in 1871. About seven societies were represented by delegates, and twenty-three by letters. They met at the invitation of the Hartford association, for prayer and conference concerning their work. These societies, the oldest of which was the Ladies' Christian Union of New York (1858), had been formed independently in different cities, and had been called forth by some Christian or philanthropic work needed in their own community, in some cases for women, sometimes for other classes. Earnest, active women, making it their responsibility to meet the need in each case, formed themselves into a society to carry on the work. The National Conference was held biennially, and in 1875, other countries being represented, the name of International Conference of Women's Christian Associations was adopted and retained until October, 1891.

A cordial interest was felt by the Young Men's Christian Association in this international movement. It was watched by them with fraternal sympathy and earnest desire that it might prosper and become the wide-spread blessing to women that their own association had proved to men. They knew that an important element in the success of the Young Men's Christian Associations lay in the strong organization of their international work



on a uniform basis of membership which closely allied them to the Evangelical church, together with an ample provision for international development and extension. They saw in this conference opportunity for Women's Christian Associations to so organize as to do a similar strong work among women and to reap a similar success. In several instances the reports of the individual Women's Christian Associations testified to the help rendered them in their organization by the Young Men's Christian Associations or by individual members of that organization. Mr. H. Thane Miller, for many years president of the Cincinnati Young Men's Christian Association, had rendered much of this kind of help in the large cities of the West and in Philadelphia in the East. At the early conferences of the Women's Christian Associations he was a welcome guest and speaker. This led him in 1875 to take a step, the wisdom of which some have questioned. On his way from the East to attend the Women's Conference at Pittsburg in 1875, he stopped in New York, sought and obtained the consent of the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations that its general secretary, Mr. R. C. Morse, should accompany him to Pittsburg and coöperate with him in presenting to the delegates a statement which Mr. Miller had prepared of the nature, rules and

methods of the international organization of the Young Men's Christian Association. The secretary accompanied Mr. Miller, and attended with him the opening meeting of the conference, leaving him to explain to the officers and members more fully the nature of the work and administration which the printed suggestion submitted by Mr. Miller and himself had outlined. A committee was appointed by the Women's Christian Association Conference to consider the proposed constitution. Discussion on this committee's report led to postponement of decision until the following—the Fourth International Conference held in Montreal in 1877, when a constitution was adopted which practically confined the international work of the Women's Christian Associations to the international biennial conference and arrangements for its conduct, and this continued to be the form of organization until October, 1891.

In the biennial conference held at St. Louis in 1881, the committee of three ladies, Mrs. Thane Miller being chairman, was appointed to encourage the formation of associations in colleges and seminaries, and in 1883 it became a standing committee.

In consultation with Mrs. Miller, Mr. Wishard prepared a circular to the young women students, together with a form of constitution, both

issued in 1883 in the name of the International Conference of Women's Christian Associations, but printed by and at the expense of the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations. The constitution recommended was formed with the Evangelical basis of active membership, and conformed in all other respects as well, to the one used in the college Young Men's Christian Associations—the one under which the young women had already been organized as a part of the association.

Mr. Wishard performed his work so thoroughly that between the years 1881 and 1885 the young women students in from eighty to ninety associations were organized separately in Young Women's Christian Associations, side by side with those of the young men, on the same basis, in accordance with the constitution recommended, with similar objects and work and pursuing similar methods. These associations were instructed to look to Mrs. H. Thane Miller as their correspondent. Had there been at this time, back of the correspondence and work thus carried on by Mrs. Miller, a strong organization, with a membership through which the student associations, after they had entered, could have received the help they needed for development and extension, they would undoubtedly have applied for admission into such a membership, and would have become an

Eighty to  
Ninety Young  
Women's  
Christian  
Associations  
Organized.

integral part of such an organization. But the constitution adopted by the fourth international conference of Women's Christian Associations in Montreal, 1877, had not made provision for such an organization. Consequently the Young Women's Christian Associations in the colleges continued to depend partly on the Young Men's Christian Associations and their agencies and also to develop independently and self-reliantly, with but little communication with the Women's Christian Associations. It is interesting to note this self-reliance as it is shown in the early state reports.

A spirit of responsibility seems to have been felt by the members of the associations in these early days. They were more or less actuated in thus banding together in their Christian work by a sense of obligation to other young women—an obligation not confined to the members of their own local association, nor even to those non-Christian students in their own college, in whom they felt a special interest. They had an appreciation of their broader privilege and duty of offering these advantages to the women in other colleges. This led them first to consider the needs of their own college, then of young women in other colleges, in the cities, the state, and afterwards the whole land. At the convention called to organize a state association in Iowa, 1884, the young president thus

simply expressed this sense of responsibility: "While *we* enjoy a Saviour's love, let us not forget the very many young women in our own state who do not know Him. Feeling this and that we needed to know more of Christ, that we needed each other's encouragement, association and prayers in our Christian work, quite a number of us young women from all parts of the state have banded ourselves together. We call our organization the Young Women's Christian Association of Iowa. Its one aim and purpose is to make the young women of Iowa active, earnest, devoted Christians. It proposes to do this through religious conversation, correspondence, Bible study and prayer. Its members to live so that the world will know we are Christ's followers. It is not a work outside of the church, but in the church, to bring others into the church."

State organization was the natural result of the relation held to the Young Men's Association, and was effected through the help afforded by its secretaries. Nine state associations were thus formed between 1884 and 1886. They were Michigan, February, 1884; Ohio, spring of 1884; Iowa, November, 1884; Illinois and Wisconsin, January, 1885; Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas and Indiana, in 1885 and 1886.

Added growth and organization brought in their train additional demands. Quite early in

Nine State  
Associations

the period of state organization came the call from cities for Young Women's Christian Associations to be organized on the same lines as those of the young men in the cities, and to be admitted into the Young Women's State Associations. Some of the state constitutions were amended so as to admit cities. This step, however, involved responsibility which was felt to be too heavy for student associations to assume. Yet, in view of the opportunity opening to them of a far-reaching work for young women, if only it could be supported by Christian women firmly united in a strong and aggressive movement, they felt they should not draw back. Acting on the advice, therefore, of their friends and helpers, Mr. Wishard and the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, which had been in full sympathy with Mr. Wishard in his work among the young women students, they took the important step of appeal to the International Conference of Women's Christian Associations assembled in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1885. This appeal was for their help and coöperation in forming a strong national organization for the development and extension of Young Women's Christian Associations.

Before the students made these overtures, however, information was sought concerning the character and work of the Women's

Christian Associations. The result did not appear to them promising for the furtherance of their object. This was not because the students felt there was a lack of consecrated Christian service and valuable work on Christian lines and lines of philanthropy in the individual Women's Christian Associations represented in their International Conference. Nor was there any question in regard to the value of the International Conference itself, affording, as it did, thoughtful, prayerful intercourse among the Women's Christian Associations, an intercourse which drew the delegates together and was of mutual benefit to themselves and to the associations, to which they returned with fresh strength and suggestion. But it was noted that thus far these conferences had not developed a uniform, national membership nor a concentration of effort on behalf of young women exclusively, such as the college associations desired to engage in, and such as they felt to be the work peculiarly and appropriately belonging to Young Women's Christian Associations. It was also noted that although some of the strongest of the individual Women's Christian Associations—either in their government or in their active membership—were on an Evangelical basis, yet there was no universally adopted test of membership which affiliated *all* the associations with the various Evan-

gelical churches—a test which had proved of invaluable service to the Young Men's Christian Associations in the remarkable development of their work and efficiency, and which the young women felt to be essential to their own organization.

To the student associations the discovery of these facts was disappointing, but they entertained the hope that the obstacles could be overcome. They thought that inasmuch as the Women's Christian Associations had no other organization than the biennial conference, they would heartily agree to form one, into which the student associations could be received and through which this definite work for young women could be done. They did not anticipate, as a result of the desired consideration at the Cincinnati Conference, any decision leading to immediate, radical reconstruction of those Women's Associations which were not already working on these lines. They believed that the experience of the Young Men's Christian Associations would satisfy the leaders of the conference that the Evangelical basis of membership would be a wise one for newly organized associations, and would gradually commend itself to the entire organization as a basis which had proved a sufficiently broad foundation for the world-wide movement among young men.

Of one point the student associations were



not aware. It was the relation their own associations held to the conference of the Women's Christian Associations, in the estimation of the conference itself. In the International Conference of Women's Christian Associations, held in Boston in 1883, the report of the Committee on Colleges and Seminaries, presented by Mrs. Miller, was received, and much gratification was expressed at the large number of Young Women's Christian Associations organized. The facts concerning their origin within the organization of the college Young Men's Christian Association seem to have been hardly noted, though the circular issued by the conference in the first instance indicates a knowledge of these facts. Their significance was evidently not realized. The student associations were accepted as the work of the special committee appointed by their conference—a not unnatural conclusion, under the circumstances. Though thus regarded, however, no record of the college associations appears in the tabulated lists of the published conference reports of the Women's Christian Associations. The independent strength of the student associations and their state organizations were unknown to the conference until 1887.

It was under these not altogether favorable conditions on either side that the representative

Appeal for  
National  
Organization.

company of student delegates and the International Conference of Women's Christian Associations met at Cincinnati in October, 1885. The committee appointed by the colleges was the bearer of greetings to the conference and resolutions adopted at their state conventions of 1884 and 1885, by the seven state associations then existing. These resolutions expressed sympathy with the work for young women which the Women's Christian Associations were doing and a desire to unite with them in forming an international organization, asking them to consider as a basis:—

Basis  
Proposed.

1. As the object of the organization: The promotion of the physical, social, mental and spiritual welfare of young women.

2. An active membership which should affiliate the organization with the Evangelical church.

3. A permanent executive committee to oversee and develop the work.

A paper had also been prepared to accompany the resolutions, stating the need felt by the student associations of such an international association.

The delegates were received most cordially at Cincinnati as a part of the conference, representing individual college associations. As such, reports of their work were asked for and received with gratification. Their message as

the representative committee from the state conventions was not known to the body of the conference. The prominent and influential leaders to whom it was presented privately, discussed the matter with the committee and urgently advised that it should not be presented to the body of the conference. Their reasons given were that the question of a national organization had already, some time before, been discussed and decided satisfactorily to itself by the conference, and that this present conference was an especially unfavorable one for such a proposition for various reasons, one being that a number of the delegates would be opposed to the Evangelical basis of membership, and the warmest advocates of the union would therefore not be willing to support the proposal at this time.

Finding that this was the attitude of the leading delegates, the committee of students did not bring the matter before the body of the conference. They returned a report of the failure of their mission to the State Executive Committees of the College Associations, adding a recommendation that "as it seems necessary that there be a national organization," a Young Women's Christian Association Convention be held in the summer of 1886 to form one on the plan of that proposed to the leaders of the Cincinnati Conference.

The first National Convention of the Young Women's Christian Associations was accordingly called for organization at Camp Collie, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, August 6-12, 1886.

National  
Organization  
Effected.

Nineteen delegates were present, representing eight state associations. A national organization was effected and a constitution adopted with the Evangelical basis of membership.

Greetings of congratulation were received from the "two hundred and ninety-eight college students" assembled in the Young Men's Christian Association Summer Bible Conference at Mount Hermon, Massachusetts.

National  
Committee  
and National  
Secretary.

Chicago was selected as the headquarters of the National Committee. Mrs. John V. Farwell, Jr., was elected chairman, and Mrs. W. W. Van Arsdale, secretary. In November, 1886, Miss Nettie Dunn, an alumna of Hillsdale College, Michigan, was called to the position of National Secretary.





RUTH ROUSE



ANNIE M. REYNOLDS



JAMES G. HILL



CORABEL TARR



NETTIE DUNN



LAURA RADFORD



FRANCES E. FIELD



MARY B. HILL

## II.

### DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION

The National Young Women's Christian Association was now fairly launched, and the committee began its work under the favoring conditions of a marked loyalty in its constituency, an earnestly prayerful spirit among the association members and a deepening sense of responsibility for the extension of the association among all young women. The demand for this extension into cities had already been made upon some of the existing state associations. Cities where state conventions were held became interested and desired a similar work for young women in their midst, and this desire, fostered and guided by the State and National Secretaries, led to organized associations. The better to secure uniformity of organization, the National Committee prepared and published a form of constitution for the help of city associations, recommending its adoption by those cities about to organize. A new state constitution was also recommended, better adapted to the states as they were now admitting city associations to membership.

The  
Evangel.

A national paper, the *Young Women's Christian Association Quarterly*, started in 1888, became in 1889 the monthly publication of the National Committee, under the name of the *Evangel*, and was issued at first during ten months, subsequently in every month of the year.

The visits of the National Secretary, her wise counsel and spiritual instruction, were eagerly sought by the individual associations. Her valuable help was deemed indispensable in state organization and conventions. As counselor to the National Committee and at the same time medium of contact between them and their associations, she was called upon to be frequently at headquarters, and yet to give an even larger proportion of time and energy to the development and extension of associations in colleges, cities and states. Although alone in a new work, with a vast territory as her field, obliged to make for herself an entirely new experience, the young secretary, with untiring and unselfish devotion, bravely and faithfully performed this pioneer work. During more than two years Miss Dunn was the only National Secretary. In this time state associations were strengthened, new ones organized, a beginning made in the state secretaryship, and student and city associations were added to the national organization



The organization of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions had resulted from the memorable missionary meetings among the College Young Men's Christian Associations assembled at Mount Hermon, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1886, followed by the visits of Mr. Wilder and Mr. Forman among the colleges. Men and women students alike became student volunteers, avowing their purpose to become foreign missionaries unless providentially hindered. The movement was in charge of a committee of three, representing the Intercollegiate Young Men's and the National Young Women's Christian Associations and the Inter-Seminary Alliance. Of the Young Women's Association, Miss Dunn, herself a volunteer, was appointed the representative in 1889. In her visitation among the colleges, she was ever mindful of this Volunteer Movement, and through her own enthusiasm and missionary spirit, was the means of bringing many to the same high resolve.

Connection  
with Student  
Volunteer  
Movement for  
Foreign  
Missions.

In 1889 two secretaries were added to the national secretarial force, Miss Corabel Tarr, as associate with Miss Dunn and Miss Thirsa Hall, whose province lay in the important charge of the office work and business detail of the growing organization. The impetus given to the work through this addition to the secre-

Three  
International  
Secretaries.

tariat force was soon felt. Parts of the country which had not hitherto been touched were visited in 1890 and 1891 and important organization was effected. Through the admission of a few associations in the British Provinces the National had already been for some time an International Association. A visit from Miss Tarr to Canada resulted in an increased membership of the British associations and a Canadian delegation to the International Convention in 1891. Thus the bond with Canada was strengthened. The Pacific Coast was carefully studied. An extensive correspondence resulted in visitation and the organization of the Pacific Coast Association. The possibilities of extension into Colorado and into the Southern states were also investigated at this time.

Reviewing the work of the nine months preceding the Scranton International Convention in 1891, Miss Tarr says in her report: "As I turn from the summary of the past crowded nine months I cannot refrain from looking into the same number of future years with great thanksgiving by faith. A future is before us which means unthought-of possibility, requiring much wise and systematic planning, more earnest, active work, not only from a few secretaries, but from a large force of volunteer workers, a constant strengthening of founda-

tion principles—a steadfast faith that God will use our faithfulness to glorify His name among the young women of the world.”

The numerical growth of the organization as reported at the Scranton Convention in 1891 was:—

Numerical  
Growth  
in 1891.

Growth in associations:—

College and city, . . .	(1886),	93;	(1891),	242
State associations, . . .	“	9	“	13
Secretaries, international, “	“	1	“	3
“ state, . . .	“	0	“	10
“ city, . . .	“	0	“	15

The membership, active and associate, in 1891, had trebled that in 1886. Nor had this numerical growth been ephemeral. Strength had been developed side by side with numbers.

The problem of secretarial training demanded much attention from the International Secretaries. From their entrance into the work both Miss Dunn and Miss Tarr gave time and thought to correspondence and intercourse with candidates for the secretaryship. It was apparent how little the qualifications for this office were understood, how narrow, in many cases, was the conception of its possibilities. On the other hand, those young women who recognized in it a profession opening to them a rare means of Christian influence among young women, in proportion as they appreciated this,

eagerly desired to be better equipped to meet its requirements.

The General Secretary of the city association is its pivot—the heart of the association, not alone as its vital centre, but also in her affectionate relation to the young women of the community. As such she is their representative in church, social and business circles. She should therefore be able to meet all classes with ease. She needs to be thoroughly informed in association principles, methods and history, in the social conditions of young women in her own and other communities; their problems and how to meet them. And to meet the needs of young women with the only effective help, the secretary should have thorough knowledge of her Bible. All this requires training.

First  
Association  
Summer  
Conference.

There was no training school yet established, and the associations were too young in experience to serve the purpose of one. Impressed with this need, Miss Tarr prevailed upon the International Committee to undertake, in the summer of 1891, an Association Summer School at Bay View, Michigan, in connection with the assembly held there every year. The result of this first attempt was the conviction among association workers that the Summer School was an indispensable factor henceforth of the work. A change of place, however, was

deemed desirable, and the school was transferred in the summer of 1892 to the Young Men's Christian Association Secretarial camp on Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, where it has continued each summer to be the conference for the associations of the middle Western states. The general plan of the first Summer Conference became the pattern of all the Association Summer Conferences since held—of which the number in 1899 was five. They proved an invaluable factor in the association development.

Instruction was afforded through carefully prepared lectures and open discussion, in the history, principles, aim and methods of the association. Specialists explained and taught the work of each of the departments. Each part of the field with its relation to all the other parts, was considered. Very special attention was devoted to the secretary and her responsibilities. But above all, prominence was given to Bible study and teaching, through general classes and workers' training classes; and the special province of the association in direct spiritual effort to win young women to Christ was emphasized in action as well as theory in the Summer Conferences. Young women heretofore Christians only in name, realized for the first time their Christian privileges and responsibilities, and others were led

to a Saviour whom they had never before accepted. Missionary and Student Volunteer meetings had always a large place in the Conference. Young women now in the foreign field, many of them, remember well that their decision to go was definitely made on the banks of Lake Geneva, or in the twilight meetings on Round Top at Northfield.

Miss Dunn retired from the secretaryship immediately after the Bay View Summer School. After a period of rest which her health demanded, she was married to Mr. Walter Clark and with him entered the foreign mission field, to which she had long desired to devote her life. As a wife and mother she has been able to exert in Northern India the influence which emanates from a Christian home.

In 1891, shortly after Miss Dunn's resignation, the International Committee called Miss Elizabeth Wilson as editor of the *Evangel*. The many demands of the field obliged her, in addition to this work, to spend much time in visitation and organization in the far West and on the Pacific Coast.

A General  
Secretary  
of the  
International  
Committee.

In view of the importance of a wise planning and supervision of time and visitation, the office of General Secretary of the International Committee was instituted, and Miss Tarr was called to the position at the close of the Bay View Summer School.

In the spring of 1892 the United Central Council of Young Women's Christian Associations of Great Britain invited representatives of the associations in other countries to unite with them in their meetings in London and to confer with them in regard to establishing a World's Conference or Association. The International Committee accepted this invitation and appointed as their delegates, their General Secretary, Miss Tarr, and one of their committee, Miss R. F. Morse.

As early as the year 1888, Mrs. L. D. Wishard, a member of the International Committee, had conferred in London, with the Hon. Emily Kinnaird and other British ladies and with the International Committee in America, as to the advisability of establishing a correspondence between the National Associations of the two countries by which they could be mutually helpful to young women passing from one country to the other. The proposition was favorably received in both lands and correspondents were appointed by each country. It is interesting to note in Mrs. Wishard's and Miss Kinnaird's letters of that time their glance into the exigencies of the future. Mrs. Wishard, referring to the importance of some official union between the British and American Young Women's Christian Associations, says: "While a World's Committee may at

Corre-  
spondence  
with  
Great Britain

some distant day be the medium of union, we are agreed that we are not yet ready for so unwieldy a body." And again: "America and Britain will stand side by side in the foreign field, and their work should not be impeded by lack of harmony in methods and wisdom in the occupation of fields." The Hon. Emily Kinnaird writes to the American correspondent appointed, expressing her gratification with the plan and adds: "I am sure it will be for the glory of God and the benefit of young women if we can, as far as possible, unitedly extend in foreign lands." Miss Breay was first appointed as the British correspondent, succeeded by others later. Miss R. F. Morse was the correspondent of the International Committee. From 1888 till 1892 letters were written as needed, but the correspondence had not developed any extended work, being limited to the sending, receiving and helping young women from Great Britain to America.

The World's  
Young  
Women's  
Christian  
Association  
Organized  
1894.

Miss Morse and Miss Tarr sailed in March of 1892, visited some of the principal associations in Great Britain and attended the London Conference, meeting there representatives of Sweden, France, Holland, Australia, India, Switzerland, South America, and the divisions of the United Kingdom. As a result of the conference the foundation of the World's Young



Women's Christian Association was laid, the organization being completed in November, 1894. Great Britain and America were strongly united in the World's Association, through sharing equally in the financial responsibility and through the composition of the World's Committee which, holding its headquarters in London with a British Executive Committee, yet called to its General Secretaryship and as one of the committee, an American, Miss A. M. Reynolds. In addition to these mutual bonds in the work, all important decisions of the committee were the result of combined consultation between the British and American members of the World's Committee. The constitution admitting of two members for America, Mrs. William Boyd (Miss Corabel Tarr) and Miss R. F. Morse were appointed by the International Committee to represent them on the World's Committee. Immediately after the organization of this World's Association, Miss Agnes G. Hill accepted the call of the Madras (India) Young Women's Christian Association to become its general secretary and sailed for India, the first foreign Young Women's Christian Association secretary sent out by the World's Committee. Thus the hopes of Mrs. Wishard and Miss Kinnaird, expressed in 1888, began to see their fulfillment in 1894. In two years' time, 1896, the National Associa-

National  
Organization  
of India,  
Burmah, and  
Ceylon.

tion of India, Burmah and Ceylon was organized with a National Committee in Calcutta, and Miss Agnes G. Hill became the National Secretary. Two years later, in June, 1898, the World's Young Women's Christian Association held its first World's Conference in London. Seven National Associations formed its constituency—the British United Central Council, the International Young Women's Christian Association of America, the Young Women's Christian Association of the Dominion of Canada, the National Associations of Sweden, Norway, Italy and India. These and fifteen other countries were represented by three hundred and twenty-six delegates at the conference. The constitution, till then provisional, was adopted and at the meetings which strengthened the ties binding together these representatives of so many different lands, the World's Executive Committee was reëlected and the headquarters were retained in London for the ensuing three years.

Preparation for the Summer Conference in its first occupancy of the camp at Lake Geneva was the principal work of the spring months of 1892. An unusual number of calls for new secretaries in the field also required Miss Tarr's time in correspondence and interviews. In November her resignation was regretfully accepted by the Committee. They felt that the

strengthened condition of every part of the work, the high standard to which the office of secretary had been lifted, as well as the establishment of the Summer Conference on a permanent foundation, and the union of America with Great Britain in a World's Young Women's Christian Association were largely due to the broad views and faithful labors of Miss Tarr.

The year of 1893 opened with six secretaries in the field engaged in international work. Miss Effie K. Price, a member of the faculty of the Northwestern Academy of Evanston, Illinois, succeeded Miss Tarr as General Secretary of the International Committee. In the same month Miss Morris was added to the office corps of workers to assist Miss Hall and Miss Wilson. Miss Emma Reeder began work as an international secretary on the Pacific Coast, and in a few months became the Pacific Coast Secretary. Miss Blanche Zehring had already been working in the spring and fall for the International Committee in New England.

While all departments of the work in the field at large had been so rapidly growing during these years, the International Committee at headquarters had increased in its membership and had developed a systematic policy. At first the committee membership consisted of eight women resident in Chicago, together with the chairmen of the state committees.

Six  
Secretaries,  
1893.

Work of the  
International  
Committee.

As the association field was enlarged and new responsibilities devolved upon the committee the need was felt of a larger number of resident members and of influential women non-residents—though not always holding the office of State Chairman nor able to give time to state work.

The constitution was amended from time to time to meet these and other requirements, and in February, 1890, was carefully revised and a set of by-laws adopted. In October, 1891, the International Committee was incorporated, with a membership of twenty-seven women, seventeen of whom were resident at headquarters, while ten non-residents represented the committee in other parts of the field. Provision was made in the by-laws for six standing committees to have charge of the several departments of finance, publications, the *Evangel*, state work, city work and college work. In 1893, through amendments in the by-laws, the *Evangel* and Publications Committees were combined in one and an Executive Committee and Secretarial Committee were added. The former was composed of the officers and the chairmen of the standing committees. To the Executive Committee were referred such questions as required decision at times when the International Committee could not as a whole be convened, and also those mat-

ters which came under no other committee's charge. The seventh—the Secretarial Committee—served the purpose of a secretarial bureau for the whole association field. Through it the International Committee was enabled to keep informed concerning candidates desiring to enter the field as secretaries and to know those who, while already in office, yet might require a change of position, as well as to hear from the associations needing secretaries. Perhaps no one of the standing committees has had a more important function than this Secretarial Committee. The International Committee, through its supervision of the whole field, the constant visitation of the traveling international secretaries and the office correspondence with all the associations, occupied a vantage ground, enabling it to weigh the needs of the various associations and to judge of the qualifications in the secretary which would in each case best meet these needs. While in this, as in all the policy and action of the International Committee, there was no dictation or interference in any respect with the freedom of action in associations, the counsel, suggestion and recommendations of the Secretarial Committee were valuable in proportion as it possessed this advantage of a broad and comprehensive view of the whole field. In almost every instance those secretaries and those asso-

ciations, both state and local, which sought and acted on the recommendations thus given, profited thereby and were less liable to mistakes than if proceeding independently of this experience and counsel. This has been and will undoubtedly always continue to be, a standing committee of inestimable value.

The province of the National Committee in the association is of such importance that its work and membership deserve more than a passing word. It is a mistake, sometimes made, to regard its province as that of dictation to the associations in the field. At the time of national organization in 1886, the leaders of the movement recognized the necessity of permanency of headquarters in a central location, with a committee of women who should stand for the centralization and unity of the work. To them should be committed the supervision of the whole field, the promulgation of the principles of the association, the maintenance of uniformity of method, together with such a study of the associations as should enable them to be most helpful to each one in the development and progress of its practical work. The Committee studies the field; exercises a fostering care of existing associations; counsels them in their work; helps them when national help is needed; recommends to them secretaries—but *recommends* only; keeps them in touch with

each other, thus guarding against mistakes in methods and through the knowledge of successful work accomplished, enabling each to learn from the experience of others, how to attain to the high ideals of the work. The Committee, also, through the prescribed conditions of membership, guards the spiritual safety and interests of the association and preserves its close alliance with the work of the Evangelical church of Christ. By no means a light or insignificant part of the Committee's work is the financial responsibility, in the careful computation of the budget for each year's growing needs and the soliciting, collecting and wise distribution of the funds. Add to this the study of extension into new fields, whether of place or department, the consideration of and decisions regarding the plans and duties of the national secretaries, and the apportionment of those duties, and it will be realized that the committee work requires wise discernment, time and labor.

The association could not have reached its present proportions and prosperity had not these conditions been met, at least in a great measure, in the committee membership. In Mrs. John V. Farwell, Jr., the first chairman of the Committee, were, in a rare degree, combined the qualifications needed to meet these requirements as well as those of the office of

chairman. Her good judgment and unselfish devotion to the work has always been an acknowledged example and incentive to other committee members. They could not but feel that they sustained an irreparable loss when Mrs. Farwell, though remaining on the Committee, was obliged in 1895, to withdraw from the arduous duties of chairman. Growing in experience and in loyalty to it as the work grew, the committee members have given to the association more and more of their time and labor, while increased discernment and wisdom have resulted from the solution of each perplexing problem. There has been no dissension among the members. Harmonious and united action has followed all discussions, even when opinions differed.

National  
Secretaries  
as Leaders  
in the Work.

Nor can the National Committee be considered apart from the National Secretaries. These latter have always been and must always be the main reliance in carrying on the active work of the national field. Both as travelers in the field and correspondents in the office at headquarters, to them the Committee has looked for information, counsel, wise plans and the effective execution of them. Nor have they looked in vain. From the pioneer secretary in the work—Miss Nettie Dunn—to the present force of seven, the National Secretaries have been faithful workers in the field and loyal



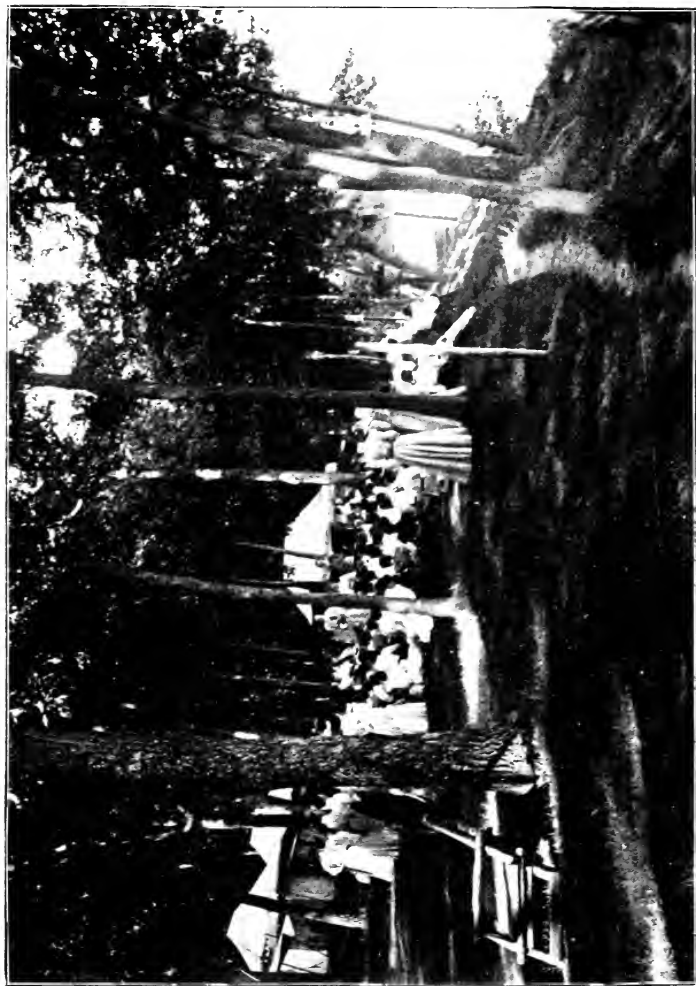
helpers of the Committee at headquarters. Who shall be able to estimate the power derived from the sense of working in a righteous cause, of leaning upon the might of the Lord and upon His guidance, which has during these fourteen years sustained and developed the American National Committee and its secretaries?

At the great Columbian Exposition—the World's Fair—in the summer of 1893, the International Association had its room in the Women's Building and its exhibit of records and photographs from the various associations. One of the International Secretaries was in attendance to give information concerning the work. Both in the Women's Congress in June and in that of religious societies in October the Association was represented, occupying a day in each. In the latter congress one of the speakers was Lord Kinnaird, president of the Young Women's Christian Association of London.

Represent-  
ation in  
Columbian  
Exposition,  
1893.

In the month of June the first Northfield Summer Conference of the Young Women's Christian Association was held in the buildings of the Seminary. In 1892 Mr. Moody had been urged by the young women students in the East to arrange for them such a conference as the Young Men's Association held at Northfield every year in July. A

Northfield  
Conference.



VESPER SERVICE, LAKE PRONT, GENEVA, WISCONSIN.

petition was drawn up, signed by a large number of those interested, and sent to Mr. Moody, who was then in England, the bearer being Miss May Whittle, now Mrs. W. R. Moody. The International Committee offered to make all arrangements for the conduct of the conference. On his return to this country Mr. Moody gave his consent and accepted the offer of the International Committee. Mr. Moody being obliged to spend most of the time of the first conference in Chicago, Mrs. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, presided. The Northfield Conference thus inaugurated has proved the blessing to Eastern students and associations that that of Lake Geneva is to the Western constituency. Mr. Moody's cordial invitation at the close of the conference of 1893 gave assurance of its permanency, and it has been held every year with increasing representation from the women's colleges of New England and the Middle States. In Mr. Moody's death in 1899, the Young Women's Christian Association suffered the loss of a warm friend.

In 1894 a Summer Conference was planned to be held at Cazadero on the Pacific Coast, but owing to the great railroad strike that summer it was impossible to carry out the plans. In 1895 the first Summer Conference for the Southern States was held at Rogersville, Tenn. Active work of visitation among the colleges of



NORTHFIELD:  
SEMINARY BUILDINGS AND ROUND TOP.

the South preceded the conference. The attendance was small, but the Southern students were interested and a beginning had been made. The following year the conference was transferred to Asheville, N. C., where it has been held every year since 1896, with increasing numbers and deepening interest. An encouraging feature, and one peculiar to this Southern gathering, is the presence of faculty members from the institutions represented. These, coming with the students, have taken a warm interest in the association as it is established in their colleges. In 1895 the Southern associations were organized in divisions, no one state being at first strong enough to stand alone. State organization was, however, soon recognized as desirable, and was begun in 1897.

At Mills College, near San Francisco, the Summer Conference of the Pacific Coast was inaugurated in 1896, and repeated in 1897. The conference was omitted in 1898, but a Metropolitan Conference was held in 1899, presided over by Miss A. M. Reynolds, the World's Secretary. In the spring of 1900 Miss Harriet Taylor spent some time on the Coast, and while there held a most successful conference at Capitola.

Aside from the spiritual blessing to individual lives, considered as a training school in the principles and practical activities of the associa-

Association  
School.

tion, the Summer Conferences have supplied at least to some extent the great need of such training. That this was not adequately met, however, by these Summer Conferences was apparent to the committee as early as 1894. The International Association School for Young Women was opened in January, 1895, in Chicago, under the charge of a Board of Directors, with Mrs. William Boyd as president. The West Side Association of Chicago was organized in connection with the school. It was hoped that the association might prove a blessing to the young women in that part of Chicago, at the same time affording a home for the school and a field of practical work for the students. From the Bible Institute, Young Men's Christian Association and other institutions were gathered instruction and suggestion. Lectures from experienced men and women engaged in Christian work were planned to broaden the student's horizon and make her intelligent in all forms of Christian activity. Daily instruction was given in the Bible and in personal work, association history, principles and methods, together with a study of the qualifications needed in secretaries, physical directors and other department officers. Special attention was also given to physical culture. The school year included three terms—winter, spring and summer. Mrs. Boyd devoted

much time and earnest labor to the work until September, 1896, when her family cares obliged her to resign.

At the biennial convention in April, 1897, it was decided to substitute for the school terms in Chicago and Evanston, training institutes to last from four to six weeks in the different city associations suitably equipped for such meetings. An institute was accordingly conducted on this plan in the Harlem Association (New York City) from March 11 to April 11, in 1898. Bible study in several lines, lectures, treatment of every department and system of association work, both of young women and young men, together with association principles and history; various branches of Christian organization other than that of the association and visits to the institutions representing these; practical demonstration of the lessons learned, by participation in the active work of the Harlem Association; these were the features of the institute. Add to this the fact that all branches of the teaching were given by experienced and acknowledged leaders in the several lines in which they excelled, and it will readily be understood that this institute under the wise leadership and administration of Miss Effie K. Price and Miss Harriet Taylor was a great blessing to those students who attended and took the full course. The devotional spirit

Training  
Institute.

pervading this little band of students made possible the blessing which resulted to each one.

Owing to the pressure of work upon all the secretaries of the committee, this training of new secretaries through institutes was discontinued, reappearing to some degree, as will be seen later, in connection with the regular work of the Chicago Association Settlement.



### III.

#### RELATIONS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF WOMEN'S AND YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRIS- TIAN ASSOCIATIONS

“Why are there two national organizations bearing similar names, defining their work and methods in similar language?”

“Why cannot these two be united in one organization?”

Within the answers to these two questions lies the history of the relations between the two organizations.

As this is not intended to be the history of both organizations, reference will be made to that of the International Board of Women's and Young Women's Christian Associations, only so far as to make clear these relations.

The origin of the Biennial Conference of Women's Christian Associations, which in 1891 became organized into the International Board just mentioned, has already been recorded, and the relation held by the student Young Women's Christian Associations to this conference.

Soon after the National—afterwards Inter-

Organization  
in Cities.

national—Association had been organized in 1886, and the existing associations in student institutions had been visited and strengthened, the International Committee turned its attention to the young women in cities. A call for organization had come from several of these, and the committee responded, sending Miss Dunn to help them. Several city associations were thus formed and came into affiliation with the International Association. The International Committee and its secretaries felt that a part of their province lay in commending the association to the communities visited, wherever the need of the work was recognized either by themselves or by others. To this degree they influenced for organization, but did not force it. First steps were usually taken by women in the city itself, who had already become interested either through knowledge of the benefit derived in other cities, through personal interviews with workers or through attendance on state or international conventions of the associations affiliated with the International Committee. To these conventions all women interested in Christian work were invited. In a city thus interested, a temporary organization would be formed by a group of women, and the International Committee would be requested to send their secretary to complete and place it on a permanent basis.

Some invitations were received, however, to organize in cities where there were already Women's or Young Women's Christian Associations not affiliated with the International Committee. The Committee responded to these invitations where it was found that the existing association was devoting its attention either to some one department, only, of association work for young women, like a boarding home; or was engaged in hospital work, home for the aged, or some class in the community other than young women. Sometimes, too, there was room in the large cities for more than one association, and the unoccupied district was the one asking the International Committee for the organization. Some six associations were organized by the International Committee in cities of this character. The work being always that which is peculiar to the Young Women's Christian Association, that name was always kept, but care was taken to prefix to it a title which should guard against confusion.

This organization of a second association in a city where there was already a Women's or Young Women's Christian Association was, however, resented by the individual association in the locality, and by the biennial conference of Women's Christian Associations, at which it was reported. The result was therefore prejudicial to the peace and harmony

which should exist between Christian societies, working in the interests of Christ's kingdom, and in the spirit of His love for their fellows. Undoubtedly there was lack of wisdom, of loving tact, and of Christian forbearance on both sides in those early days, and difficulties arose in the work of both organizations. It is not the purpose of this history to deal with the details of these difficulties, but rather to briefly relate the efforts on both sides to bring about a harmonious settlement and a method of carrying on the work in both organizations so that neither might be hindered in its own province, nor, on the other hand, be a hindrance to the sister organization.

Five Attempts  
for  
Harmonious  
Relations.

Five distinct attempts have been made to establish harmonious relations. In 1889 committees were appointed by the Women's Christian Associations Conference and by the International Committee, to confer together for this purpose. The International Committee drew up and laid before the Women's Christian Associations a proposed line of conduct, which it would pursue, if the Women's Associations accented it also. The object of the plan was to avoid friction, and yet pursue the work of extension in the cities, as far as possible, harmoniously. In 1891, when this proposal was considered by the Women's Christian Associations, they had

organized, at their tenth biennial conference in Chicago, into the International Board of Women's and Young Women's Christian Associations. The International Board did not respond to the proposed policy of the International Committee, but proposed that the International Committee change its name, give up the charge of its forty-three cities, and confine its work for the future to student associations. This proposal was refused by the International Committee.

In 1893 the Albany Association—independent, not being affiliated with either the International Committee or the International Board, drew up a plan by which both organizations should unite to form one new society. This proposition met the approval of the International Committee's associations, as its outlined plan guaranteed the preservation of the fundamental principles of the association. The convention at Toledo voted its acceptance. But the International Board voted not to accept it, at its conference in the same year. Thus this second attempt failed.

Personal interviews between individuals, leaders, and workers, led to the third plan—this time formed after long conference between two committees of four each, representing the two organizations. This, again, was a proposal that all the associations of both the Inter-

national Committee and the International Board should unite to form one new association. When these committees separated, and the International Board, at its Brooklyn conference, held immediately afterwards, voted to accept the plan, subject to the approval of its individual associations, it seemed as if union were, indeed, to be effected. Further consultation and conference by two larger committees of ten each, appointed for the purpose of adjusting the details of the plan, revealed obstacles deemed by some insurmountable to a union. These obstacles presented themselves when the constitution was discussed. The basis of membership, representation at conventions, agencies of the work, permanent headquarters—these were the principal features on which the two committees could not agree to the satisfaction of both. Had the fundamental condition of union been preserved, however, even these difficulties might have been overcome. The agreement that all associations then existing in the International Board of Women's and Young Women's Christian Associations should form a part of the new organization, *no change being required in their constitutions*, removed any difficulty in regard to the basis of membership for themselves. This condition remained unchanged throughout the deliberations of the Adjustment Committee. The *adoption of the*

*Evangelical basis of membership for future associations* desiring to join the new organization would have met the principles of the International Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations. It was the withdrawal by the International Board from the agreement to this condition of the adoption of the Evangelical basis of membership in the constitution of the new organization which, in the end, decisively blocked the proceedings. The reason given by the Adjustment Committee of the International Board for this action was a decided preference for a different basis of membership and a fear, justified, it was felt, by knowledge of the wishes of its associations, that many would not join the new organization and thus the Board would lose its members, for which loss union would not compensate.

The attempt to unite having failed, an agreement was drawn up by the joint Adjustment Committee, as follows:—

“ARTICLE 1. Where one association is complicated by the presence of another in the same locality, causing thereby misunderstanding or confusion in name, in the work undertaken, in the possession of property, or any other complications, we will recommend representatives of both organizations to come together for friendly adjustment of these difficulties.

Agreement of  
Adjustment  
Committee.

“ART. 2. In localities where an association

already exists, neither body shall organize another association bearing the same name without the consent of the existing association.

“ART. 3. When either international body is about to enter a new field, investigation shall be made concerning the relation of the other body to this field, and, if open, notification of intention to occupy it shall be sent to the other international body.

“ART. 4. In all questions causing misunderstanding, judgment will be withheld until full explanation has been received from both sides.

“ART. 5. Our two organizations shall exchange publications and other courtesies, and shall strive to prove that the work is to be carried on “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts.”

This paper was signed by the members of the joint Adjustment Committee, presented to their respective Executive Committees, and was accepted as their rule of action until the following biennial meetings of each organization, when it was to be presented to these meetings for ratification.

In December, 1896, an independent student association in Philadelphia applied for admission into the International Committee's membership. The application had been made directly after a long-promised visit from the general secretary of the International Committee. The Philadelphia city association, affiliated



with the International Board, took exception to this action because consultation had not been sought with them, and claimed that the Agreement had been violated. Correspondence failed to bring about a satisfactory understanding, and, after a few letters, the International Committee proposed a representative conference of those concerned, that harmony might be restored, at the same time expressing willingness that the student association should withdraw from affiliation with the committee, if, after the conference, such a course should seem wise. The Philadelphia association and the International Board's committee not consenting to this proposed conference, there seemed no way to secure harmony. The correspondence carried on between these two committees had revealed the fact, also, that they differed in their interpretation of the Agreement. The facts were laid before the Young Women's Christian Associations in the International Convention at Detroit in 1897, together with a full report of the Adjustment Committee. The convention gave the matter very careful consideration, and adopted the following resolutions:—

“WHEREAS, We, the International Young Women's Christian Association, in convention assembled, feel that the Adjustment Agreement of the committee on relations is not suffi-

ciently explicit to lead to a clear understanding and prevent confusion of ideas, and

“WHEREAS, We recognize the difficulty of forming an agreement which shall bear the same interpretation to members of two bodies, differing somewhat in methods and use of terms,

“*Resolved*, That we refer it back to the International Committee, with the following instructions:—

“1. To express again to the International Board our unanimous desire for the deepening of such a friendly spirit in all the work as shall best promote mutual Christian relations.

“2. That while we have nothing to suggest as a substitute for the proposed Agreement between the two organizations, we hope for the framing of a policy which shall make our own members intelligent, so that they may appreciate the importance of comity on the field, and the development and extension of the spirit of harmony which we deem indispensable to success in the work of Christian bodies.”

The fourth attempt had failed. What then should be the next plan?

In the summer of 1897 the International Committee decided to adopt a working policy for its own organization to govern its relations with the International Board; a policy to be tested during the two years which should intervene before the convention of 1899, to be strictly adhered to or modified, whichever were

proved the wiser by practical experience. The policy adopted followed closely the articles of the Agreement as they were understood and intended by the International Committee at the time of the adjustment meetings.

As presented to the Milwaukee Convention in 1899, this policy read as follows:—

Working  
Policy  
Adopted by  
International  
Convention,  
1899.

“The International Committee having received the instructions conveyed in the resolutions adopted at the Detroit Convention, in regard to our relations with the International Board of Women’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations, after careful consideration, adopted, at the regular meeting of the committee in June, the following resolutions:—

“WHEREAS, the convention at Detroit in April, 1897, voted not to ratify the agreement as proposed by the Adjustment Committee and accepted by the International Committee for the time intervening between June, 1896, and April, 1897, but referred it back to the International Committee with certain instructions:—

“*Resolved*, That in place of an agreement with the International Board, the International Association adopt for itself a *working policy*, to be tested during the next two years, until the International Convention of 1899. That this policy cover the following ground:—

“I. That wherever there are at present complications in cities, the existing associations belonging to different international bodies, or holding an independent position, we will recommend endeavor to bring about a satisfactory

adjustment of these difficulties, and to promote harmonious relations between the associations, accomplishing this when practicable by means of friendly conference of the local associations.

“II. In localities where but one city association already exists, either belonging to the International Board or independent, we will not organize another city association bearing the same name, without the consent of the first named association. In cities where the International Association and the International Board have each one or more associations, the rights and interests of all these local associations shall be carefully considered before deciding on organizing a new association, and every reasonable effort be made to avoid complications.

“III. When we are about to enter a new field, investigation shall first be made concerning the relations of the International Board to this field, and care be taken to avoid any action which would be prejudicial to the interests of the Board.

“IV. We will cordially respond to requests for explanation from the International Board, investigate any action of ours which may be deemed by the Board contrary to the preservation of harmonious relations between the two organizations, and strive to avoid, in the first instance, giving cause for such complaint.

“V. We will recommend and constantly seek to further, cordial and prayerful intercourse between all associations and individual workers of both our international organizations, especially in conventions and conferences, in the

hope and belief that through this intercourse we shall finally come together into the one united organization, so greatly to be desired.

*“Resolved,* That while adopting this as our policy, we will consider it flexible, and during these two years, either by adhering strictly to it, or by modifying it, as we may be led, under Divine guidance, we will endeavor to reach a plan which shall meet all the exigencies of the association field in this important respect.

“INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.”

The International Board was courteously informed of these steps as they were taken, and asked to form a policy for its own action similar to that of the International Committee, that the two organizations might work in concert. Though this was not done, the working policy of the International Committee so well met the need, that during the two years no modification was found necessary, and the convention at Milwaukee, 1899, adopted the plan as it stood, for the next two years.

It is the earnest desire of the American Committee that good will and harmony between the two organizations may characterize the coming years, and that the future may yet see their Christian work for young women united in one association.



ASHEVILLE.

## IV.

### DEPARTMENTAL WORK

With the South opening to association work; the West developing, and city associations multiplying, the field of the association had so rapidly extended that it was evident additional National Secretaries and more undivided attention were needed for each separate part and department.

Changes had occurred in the secretarial staff. In the office at headquarters in 1894, Miss Thirsa Hall was succeeded by Miss Carrie B. Wilson. On the resignation of Miss Elizabeth Wilson, the *Evangel* had been edited for a short time by Miss A. M. Reynolds, and on her call to become the World's Secretary in July, Miss Eva Seevers took the position. The long desired College Secretaryship was filled by Miss Florence Simms of DePauw University. Other secretaries were called for a time to do special work for the committee, and in 1896 Miss Mary Morris was added to the international corps as helper in the office. A new department, that for city associations, was formed, and to Miss Harriet Taylor, State Secretary of New York,

College  
Secretary.

City  
Secretary.

was offered the City Secretaryship. Miss Taylor accepted the call and began her work as International City Secretary in October, 1895. At the convention of 1897, in Detroit, the secretarial report of the work accomplished by each of these secretaries and that of Miss Price in Summer Conferences, State Conventions and college and city visitation, gives evidence that the enlarged secretarial force was yet too small to meet all the demands and opportunities of the field. The new City Department had been well established. Through careful correspondence and visitation the field was canvassed. The condition and needs of the city associations, their boards and secretaries, as well as the social conditions of young women in the various cities were thoroughly investigated. Each association thus received the valuable help of experience gained from the broad and intimate knowledge of all. For the International Committee this knowledge was systematized, and through maps and tables an insight secured into their city associations which they had not been in a position to obtain hitherto.

Impetus to  
Educational  
Work in  
the City  
Associations.

An additional advantage of great value to the city associations was obtained through the city department at this time, in the impetus given to educational work. Through the courteous invitation of the International Young



Men's Christian Association, the city associations of the young women were admitted to a share in their educational examinations, and were granted the certificates which are officially recognized by the universities and colleges of the country. Miss Taylor devoted attention to this work until it had been placed on a firm footing. In two years the branches of study increased from five to twelve, and the certificates at first received in fifteen educational institutions were recognized in one hundred and five. The results, from the first, in the young women's educational classes where the examinations were taken, were most gratifying.

The investigation into the social conditions of women in cities led the International Committee to realize how great a field was yet untouched by the Young Women's Christian Associations. The opportunities afforded to enter this field through settlement work were apparent. The results of the Christodora Settlement for young women in New York City had proved the possibility and power of relying upon the Gospel of Christ and its proclamation in the conduct of the work. The Christodora Settlement, while not affiliated with the International Committee for reasons satisfactory to both parties, had been started by association workers. The committee in control were in

full sympathy with the International Association, and the work was conducted on association methods.

While the needs of women in the cities were thus occupying the thoughts of association workers, an opportunity was suddenly presented to the International Committee to open such a settlement in a part of Chicago, where young women were surrounded with peculiar perils.

"Association  
House."

A house was secured in this locality. Miss Clara Y. Morse, under the direction of the International Committee and the North Chicago Association, worked indefatigably among the young women of the neighborhood, at whose request the settlement was formed. From the first the number attending the settlement was such as could hardly be accommodated, and at no time has the interest flagged, or the work ceased to develop what was hoped for in the community.

College women often desire to give of their educational advantages to their sisters less favored in this respect. It has proved a blessing to them in return, to recognize and appreciate the sturdy independence, self-reliance, and courage of the self-respecting young woman, who is often not only self-supporting, but who bears the responsibility of the bread winning for the family of which she is a member.

The college woman who takes up life seriously in such a settlement as has been described, acquires a knowledge of women, their lives and surroundings in the cities, which is of inestimable value to her in Christian work of any kind among young women.

Thus the Chicago Association Settlement, while proving a blessing to the young women of the community, served in some measure to give practical training for Christian work to the students who came as residents in the settlement. Some of these were looking forward to the secretaryship. With the practical work of the settlement was combined, therefore, instruction and training in secretarial lines. Two secretarial institutes were thus held there. Miss Elizabeth Wilson, Miss Clara Y. Morse, and Miss Hyatt, have in turn had charge of the work of the settlement, and Miss Carrie B. Wilson is now its head resident.

The secretarial institutes are the latest endeavor made by the American Committee to meet the constant need of secretarial training. That need has been felt throughout the national existence of the association. It is yet to be satisfactorily met. The inevitable lack of permanency in the secretaryship of this woman's organization gives emphasis to the training problem. May it be thoroughly solved within the next few years!

Systematic  
Bible Study.

The need of systematic Bible study in various lines was felt for, and in many instances by, the associations. The entrance of Miss Laura Wild into the international secretarial band afforded the opportunity for investigation and special attention in this direction. Correspondence was carried on with the associations to ascertain the needs in Bible study; conferences, conventions, and associations were visited, where short Bible courses were given, and much help was thus afforded during the years of 1897 and 1898. Miss Seevers having accepted a call to the association of Des Moines, Iowa, Miss Wild combined with her Bible work the editing of the *Evangel*.

The student associations, from which the national organization had first sprung, continued to occupy by far the larger part of the association field. It was important that this department should have undivided secretarial attention. Miss Simms had also been called into city work. Miss Price as General Secretary could not give this attention, yet she was held in such affectionate esteem by the students that the committee were united in their judgment that she was the one to take the position of Student Secretary. The constant call upon her to speak in the city associations at annual meetings and at state conventions, together with the cares of the general administration,

made it impossible for her to accept this office unless relieved of that of General Secretary of the International Committee. Miss Taylor had won the confidence of the committee by her administrative ability, and they felt that in Miss Price as Student Secretary and Miss Taylor as General Secretary these two most important positions would be well filled. Both Miss Price and Miss Taylor were consulted and their judgment coincided with that of the committee. The changes were accordingly effected in May, 1898. As, however, this left the city department without a secretary, Miss Laura Wild accepted the position in 1899, occupying it until her resignation from the national secretaryship in 1900.

An associate student secretary was secured in Miss Ruth Rouse of London, England. Miss Rouse had been visiting American colleges as Student Volunteer Secretary, and was thus already to a great extent familiar with the field. A severe illness obliged Miss Price to rest from all work from May, 1898, till January, 1899. Through a generous gift at the Northfield Conference, 1898, the committee was enabled to call Miss Bertha Condé to assist Miss Rouse, and for a few months early in 1899 the three student secretaries worked helpfully together. It was with great regret the committee saw Miss Rouse leave the field. Not

Three Student  
Secretaries.

only had she supplied the place left vacant so suddenly by Miss Price's illness, but she had endeared herself to the committee by her personal consecration, beauty of character, and loyalty and ability in the work. She was urged to stay another year, but as a Student Volunteer she longed to begin her work in the foreign field and could not be persuaded to longer delay responding to her call to India. After attending the International Convention in Milwaukee, 1899, she sailed for London.

American  
Secretary in  
London  
Association.

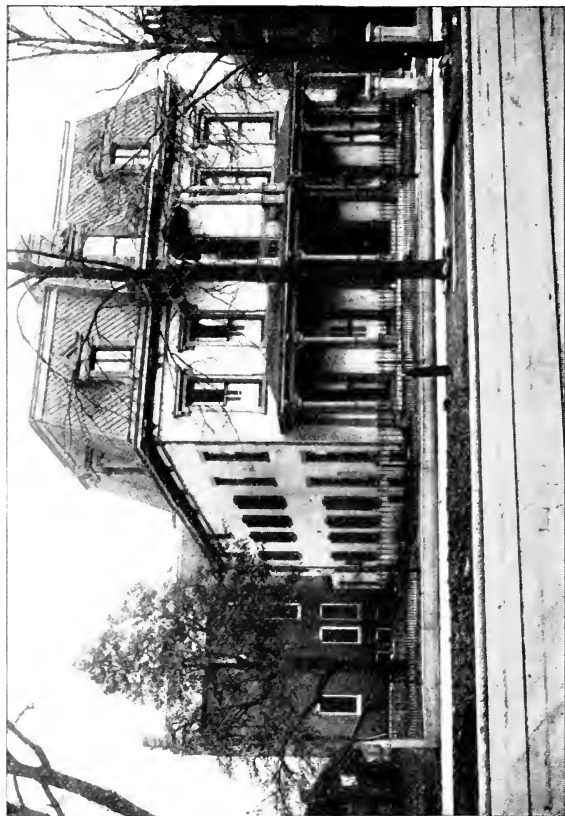
It is a gratifying recognition of the mutual help which America and Great Britain are receiving through the association, that while Miss Ruth Rouse was International Student Secretary in America, Miss Mary McElroy of the Harlem (New York City) Association was called by the British Young Women's Christian Association to the secretaryship of the Central Institute in London, remaining for a few months at the close of the first World's Conference—as long as her own Harlem Association would permit. The following year, 1899, Miss Frances Field, educational director of the same association (Harlem), accepted a position of assistant with Miss Duff in the Preparation (Training) Association Home in London, whither, after spending the summer in America, she has returned for another year.

In June, 1898, the student department of the

Young Women's Christian Association was strengthened by affiliation with the World's Student Christian Federation.

During the years of 1895 and 1896, in friendly conference together, the International Committee and the Canadian Associations affiliated with the Committee, agreed that the conditions in Canada made it wise for that country to organize an association of its own, separate from that of the United States. The International Committee therefore gave a cordial consent to the withdrawal of the Canadian associations and the National Association of the Dominion of Canada was organized. Through its affiliation with the World's Association, the friendly connection between the United States and Canada was preserved, and there is frequent intervisitation at Summer Conferences and Biennial Conventions.

Withdrawal of  
Canadian  
Associations  
to form  
Dominion  
of Canada  
Association.



YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA, 1901.



## V.

### PROGRESSIVE STEPS AND PRESENT CONDITION OF THE FIELD

The important place held by the Biennial Convention in the system of the Young Women's Christian Association should be noted in the history of the organization.

The National Committee, as in one sense the heart of the system, is designed to send forth to all parts of the field that which will stimulate Christian thought and action. Through this provision the united prayers, efforts and gifts of widely separated associations may be made not only a blessing to themselves, but a far-reaching good to others. Meanwhile the State Committees, in their respective states, stand as helpful associates with the National Committee, serving in the double function of arteries and veins by conveying the outgoing and incoming currents.

Yet, in another and very real sense, the individual is the centre of the system. The young woman active member is the moving spirit of the whole association. It is for her sake that association principles are what they are; for her all methods are arranged. The problem of

her welfare is the study of the association. It is her voice that determines the action of the whole and the government of the association.

Nowhere is this fact more fully demonstrated than in the rules that govern the Biennial Convention and its representatives. The active member of every association has a voice in the selection of the delegates who shall represent her at the convention. It is to the representatives of the individual associations thus selected that all reports and recommendations are referred. The women whom they elect are those who shall form the National Committee, and it is the vote of these representatives that decides the policy by which the whole field shall be regulated during the two years which shall intervene before the next convention.

This same principle underlies the government of the state and local associations, and extending in the opposite direction, applies with equal consistency to the government of the World's Association. This last is represented at the World's Conference, not on the basis of national nor state, but of individual local associations, every five of these being entitled to a voting representative in the Conference.

Seven  
Biennial  
Conventions.

The decisions of the Biennial Convention mark the steps of the work thus far accomplished. Including the first one in 1886, there

have been seven of these. The convention of 1886, held at Camp Collie, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, organized scattered associations and those in State Associations into the National Association of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States. Of these there were one hundred and thirteen in twenty states.

The six conventions following were held in the cities of Bloomington, Illinois, 1889; Scranton, Pennsylvania, 1891; Toledo, Ohio, 1893; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, 1895; Detroit, Michigan, 1897; Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1899.

The name of the organization was changed in 1889 to "International Association of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States and British Provinces;"

in 1895 to "The International Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations;"

in 1899 to "The American Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations."

A paper issued in quarterly numbers for one year was begun in 1889, continued afterwards as a monthly issue under the name of the *Evangel*.

Steady growth in number of associations and membership has marked each succeeding convention. Beginning in 1886 with one hundred

and thirteen associations in twenty-one states, there was reported in

1889—210 in 33 states and territories.

1891—200 student and 42 city associations in 31 states, with a student membership of 7,784 and a city membership of 4,799; 13 State Associations.

1893—255 student, 52 city associations—membership, 9,656 student; 10,067 city; 16 State Associations.

1895—280 student, 59 city associations; student membership, 11,115; in cities, 18,344.

1897—286 student, 59 city associations; students, 11,316; city membership, 22,147.

1899—368 student associations, with membership of 16,160; 59 city associations, with 21,322 members; 21 State Associations.

The secretarial force, international, state and city shows as steady and in some years a more rapid growth in numbers. Beginning with one National Secretary in 1886, in—

1889—There are 4 state and 4 city secretaries.

1891—Three international, 10 state and 15 city secretaries.

1893—To the 3 international, were added 3 for special sectional work; 7 state and 45 city secretaries.

1897—Six international, 11 state and 48 city secretaries and 12 physical directors.

1899—Six International Secretaries and 3

special workers; 9 state and 51 city secretaries.

The finances have been most carefully administered by the Committee. The increasing expenditure from year to year proves corresponding increase in the opportunities of extension afforded. The larger gifts also bear witness to increasing interest and confidence of contributors in the organization. It is cause for congratulation that while there was an expenditure of only \$830, a sum obtained with difficulty, in the first year of the national work, the amount contributed and expended during the two years, from April, 1897, to April, 1899, was \$27,609.93, and the sum required for 1899-1901 was estimated at \$34,000. In the years of 1898 and 1899 larger gifts than in any previous year have been received from individuals for the support of national secretaries.

The one "Summer School" at Bay View, Michigan, 1891, has broadened into four summer conferences—Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, in 1892; Northfield, Massachusetts, in 1893; Asheville, North Carolina, first held at Rogersville, Tennessee, in 1895; Mills College recently removed to Capitola, in California.

The Canadian associations have joined the association of the United States, and have retired from it to form the Dominion of Canada Association between the years of 1888 and 1895.

The International Committee enlarged its membership from convention to convention, with increasing system in the ordering of its administration. In 1895 it was incorporated. The constitution has been amended or revised, to meet the needs of the advance in work.

Alliance with strong kindred organizations was reported in the conventions of 1889, Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions; 1895, the World's Young Women's Christian Association; 1899, the World's Student Christian Federation.

The features of the last convention in 1899 were: departmental work—secretarial, student, city, including educational progress; girls' branch work and settlements; study of state problems; secretarial training; systematic Bible study, and the deepening of spiritual life.

The year 1900 finds the American Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations with a constituency of four hundred and two student, sixty-four city, and twenty-one state associations. The national band of workers is a committee of twenty-nine members, seven national secretaries in charge of the departmental work; six more doing special state or city work. In the field are nine state and fifty-nine city secretaries, together with a large force of educational directors, physical direct-

ors, directors of domestic and of art departments, and office and assistant secretaries.

While statistics have their place in the history of an organization, yet they cannot truly tell the whole story. Behind some of the smallest figures often lies a wealth of encouragement, and, on the other hand, what seems prosperity to the superficial observer may grieve the deeper insight of the spiritual worker. Trying times are the lot of all organizations. A history of the Young Women's Christian Association would not be faithful were it to claim exemption from these. There have been financial straits which have greatly discouraged the National Committee. There has been failure to execute good plans, and there have been mistakes in judgment among leaders and workers at headquarters and in the field. Associations have failed to reach their high ideals, and some, alas! have set their ideal too low. There has been weakness where there should have been strength, ignorance instead of knowledge, mistakes in the place of wisdom.

Yet the association has proved strong enough to survive and to reach its present position, because it is grounded in Christian principles. The weakness and failure have drawn the workers together for prayer and more entire dependence on Him whose faithfulness has more than met and overcome their many fail-

ures. There is much encouragement in the present condition of the field and its outlook for the future.

Since the convention of 1899 the recommendations there adopted have been faithfully followed. In June the city department, which the resignation of Miss Laura Wild in the winter had left without a national secretary, was strengthened by three city secretaries, Miss Mary Dunn, Miss Elizabeth Wilson, and Miss Helen Barnes. With this reinforcement there is good prospect of solving many hitherto unsolved problems. Some of the prominent city associations, which from one or another cause have fallen behind, and have need only of undivided attention to make them a power, are now receiving that attention. The untouched fields are being reached. One of these national city secretaries has only recently received an invitation from the young women themselves to speak to them in a factory of over seven hundred. The settlement in Chicago is demonstrating the solution of the same problem. The establishment of association branches in different sections of our large cities is another approved method of accomplishing these results. Commodious, central buildings are necessary in our metropolitan centers, and such are now owned by ten or twelve of the city associations, but the conditions of young



women in these cities call for a somewhat different plan for Young Women's Christian Associations than that pursued by the Young Men's Christian Association. With the latter the erection of large buildings where the work is carried on has formed a remarkable era in its history. For young women it is more to be desired that, with a moderately large central building, effort should be concentrated on the establishing of small association branches, easy of access to the young women living in the vicinity, in every section of the city. The beginnings of this plan have been made, and there is prospect of a report of much greater accomplishment at the Biennial Convention in 1901.

The Bible department is this year made the responsibility of the other departments, each in its own field. Always the vital principle of the Young Women's Christian Association, the importance of Bible study in the associations cannot be overestimated. There is manifested an increasing appreciation of this. A Bible Institute teacher speaks of the Young Men and Young Women Christian Association workers as "lovers of the English Bible and the study of it." Hand in hand with this is an increasing appreciation of the power of prayer. Testimonies from the Summer Conferences confirm this.

Strength  
Derived from  
Affiliation  
with Student  
Volunteer  
Movement;

Three organizations with which the American Committee of Young Women's Christian Associations is working in close alliance, have been referred to incidentally, but further mention of them will show what strength is derived from this alliance. The Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions is the oldest of these. Its beginning in 1886 has been already recounted. This organization is the combination of the Young Men's and Young Women's Associations and the Theological Seminaries of the country. From year to year it has increased in numbers and in strength and breadth of service. It now stands as the medium of communication between the young men and young women students of the country and the Foreign Missionary Boards of the Evangelical Church of Christ. From the ranks of the Student Volunteers the missionary boards expect and receive recruits for the foreign field. Through alliance with this Movement the student department of the association is in touch with all the foreign missionary work of the church in this country. A large part of the obligation laid upon the student department of the association through this connection is to foster the study of missions in young women's colleges, and to watch for those who are called to go to the field as missionaries. Under the direction of the Student Volunteer Movement there have been

in the colleges during the year 1899-1900 five hundred mission study classes with a membership of almost five thousand. While this number includes men and women students, it is to be noted that this year four young women secretaries are engaged either for the whole or part of their time in college visitation for this direct missionary work.

The World's Student Christian Federation is the outcome of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Student Volunteer Movement combined. It is to unite all Christian students of the world in prayer and activity for the winning of students to Christ in the first instance, the deepening of the spiritual life of students, and, by means of students, the extending of Christ's kingdom throughout the world. The Federation, formed in 1895 by the student organizations of America and Great Britain, Germany and Scandinavia, after two years' visitation of the student institutions of the world by John R. Mott, extended so rapidly as to embrace in 1899 besides these countries, national branches in India, Ceylon, Australia, South Africa, China, Japan, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

With World's  
Student  
Christian  
Federation;

The student department of the Young Women's Christian Association, through affiliation with that of the Young Men, is a part of this World's Student Christian Federation.



DELEGATION FROM UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
CAPITOLA, 1900.

While thus the world-wide missionary field is brought before the student department, the cultivation of the home field lays also a heavy responsibility upon it. Gathered in the American Associations in educational institutions for young women are over twenty-one thousand students, but in these same institutions there are over *forty-two* thousand students. The social, moral and spiritual conditions in the women's educational institutions are calling for very special thought and attention. It has come to be time for the General Secretary to be in the university as well as in the city association. A beginning has been made and there are five of these college secretaries. Three college associations also own buildings.

The students in cities pursuing special courses have also received attention from the student department, and have been drawn together through Metropolitan Conferences held for them from time to time. This branch of the work is as yet new, but gives promise of future fruit. Study of all these conditions of student life—visitation, correspondence and encouragement—these constitute the active service of the student department.

The third organization of strength to the American Association is the World's Young Women's Christian Association organized in 1894. At present nine national organizations

With the  
World's  
Young  
Women's  
Christian  
Association.

belong to it, while scattered associations in many lands are included through the representation of corresponding members on the World's Committee. Into India, Japan, China, South Africa and South America the Young Women's Christian Association has entered—India is already nationally organized. The student department is receiving special attention from American and British young women students, with Miss Ruth Rouse as student secretary for India. Miss Reynolds, the World's Secretary, is now in Japan, having accepted an invitation from missionaries to investigate conditions for the associations there, and China has sent an urgent call for the city association in its large cities. Thus again through this third organization the world opens its doors to the Young Women's Christian Association. World-wide days and weeks of prayer are observed now for this great and important work.

The liberal decision of the American Committee to merge their own week of prayer into that called for by the World's Association Committee, in November, 1899, together with the recommendation to the associations to devote the collections of that week to the World's Association work, has had a definitely broadening effect upon the associations. Gratitude, and appreciation of their own association privileges in the home land, with an

L. of C.

accompanying sense of responsibility for foreign lands—these are the blessed results.

And the *Evangel*, the bearer of report as to the condition of the field and the work of all these agencies, is in the hands of the departments, to be made a messenger indeed of “good tidings.”

The “*nine future years*” into which, at the Scranton Convention in 1891, the International secretary, Miss Tarr, looked “*with great thanksgiving by faith*” were completed in April, 1900. That faith has been justified. There is in the association field “*earnest, active work, not only from a few secretaries, but from a large force of volunteer workers.*” The American committee, the state committees, the boards and committees of city associations, the faculty as well as students in the large student field, all testify to the increase of volunteer service.

Hopes of 1891  
Verified.

There has never been a time since 1891 when the “*constant strengthening of foundation principles*” has not been of moment, and it is perhaps now more than ever before appreciated.

One of the quiet but most powerful agencies of the year 1900 has been the prayer circle which has assembled every Monday in the American Committee's office in Chicago. That prayer circle embraces not only those in Chi-

cago—secretaries and committee members—but also the non-resident members of the Committee, state chairmen, state and city secretaries in this country and in other lands. Thus there is “*more united prayer for the work and workers, a remembering that the work is not ours, but our Father’s.*”

The World’s Young Women’s Christian Association and the World’s Student Christian Federation have steadily won their way into the hearts of American association members, broadening their horizon, deepening their sense of obligation to young women in all lands. Three American young women, the two Misses Hill and Miss Laura Radford, have gone from the home association field to take up the same work in India, and the home field they have left is supporting them in their work among India’s young women. Out from association ranks in America also have gone missionaries under the boards of the various churches. Every member thus putting her life and service in lands dark from the lack of Christ’s gospel has enlightened the minds and deepened the interest of her association at home and made more “*steadfast*” the “*faith that God will use our faithfulness to glorify His name among the young women of the world.*”

The Future. The future of 1891 is the present of to-day. To-day also has its future. There lies before



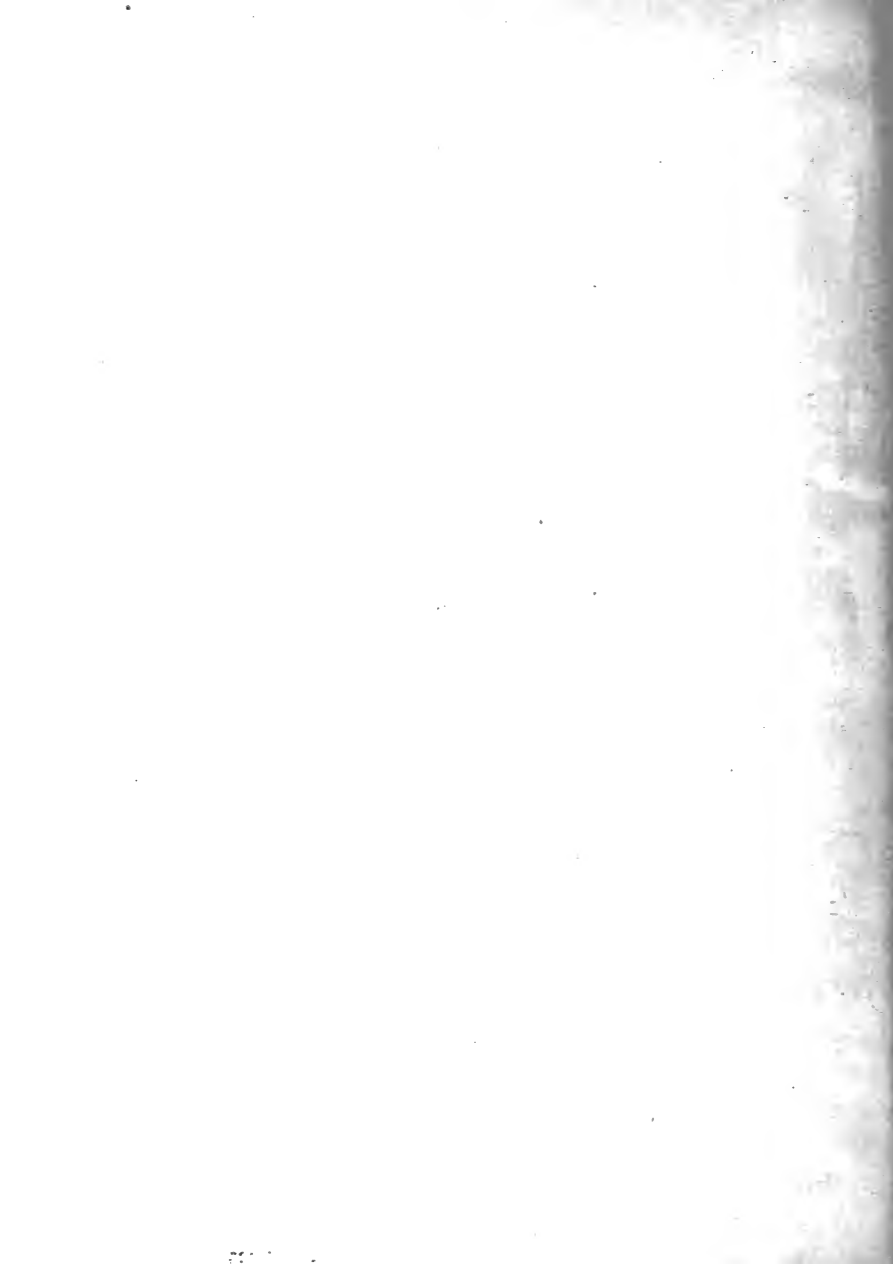
the Young Women's Christian Association a field of opportunity as yet but lightly touched here and there upon the surface. Its area in the United States alone is increasing every year. What shall be said as to responsibilities to be met shortly in Hawaii, Cuba, the Philippines? Commerce and education have so influenced the condition of young women in China, Japan, India, South Africa and other lands, that their needs are found to be startlingly similar to those of young women in our own country. The factory, the business office, the student hall in these lands, as in ours, call for the association. Their appeal to America to help them can be met through the door of the World's Association, that door of opportunity opened to us within the past nine years.

Shall the field be occupied? If so, there must be advance. Larger gifts of money to support workers in the field; secretaryships endowed by Christian women and men from the wealth entrusted to their stewardship; a much larger force of secretaries; larger provision for training workers; well-equipped training schools for this purpose; a large number of wise and prayerful women consecrating themselves to the volunteer work of administration. Most needed of all, a continually increasing force of young women whose consecrated lives

are offered for this work wherever the Lord calls, at home or in mission fields abroad.

Should this advance be made within the next decade, the dawn would indeed be bright of the Silver Jubilee of the American Young Women's Christian Association in 1911.





May-18. 1901



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